



Anglia Ruskin
University

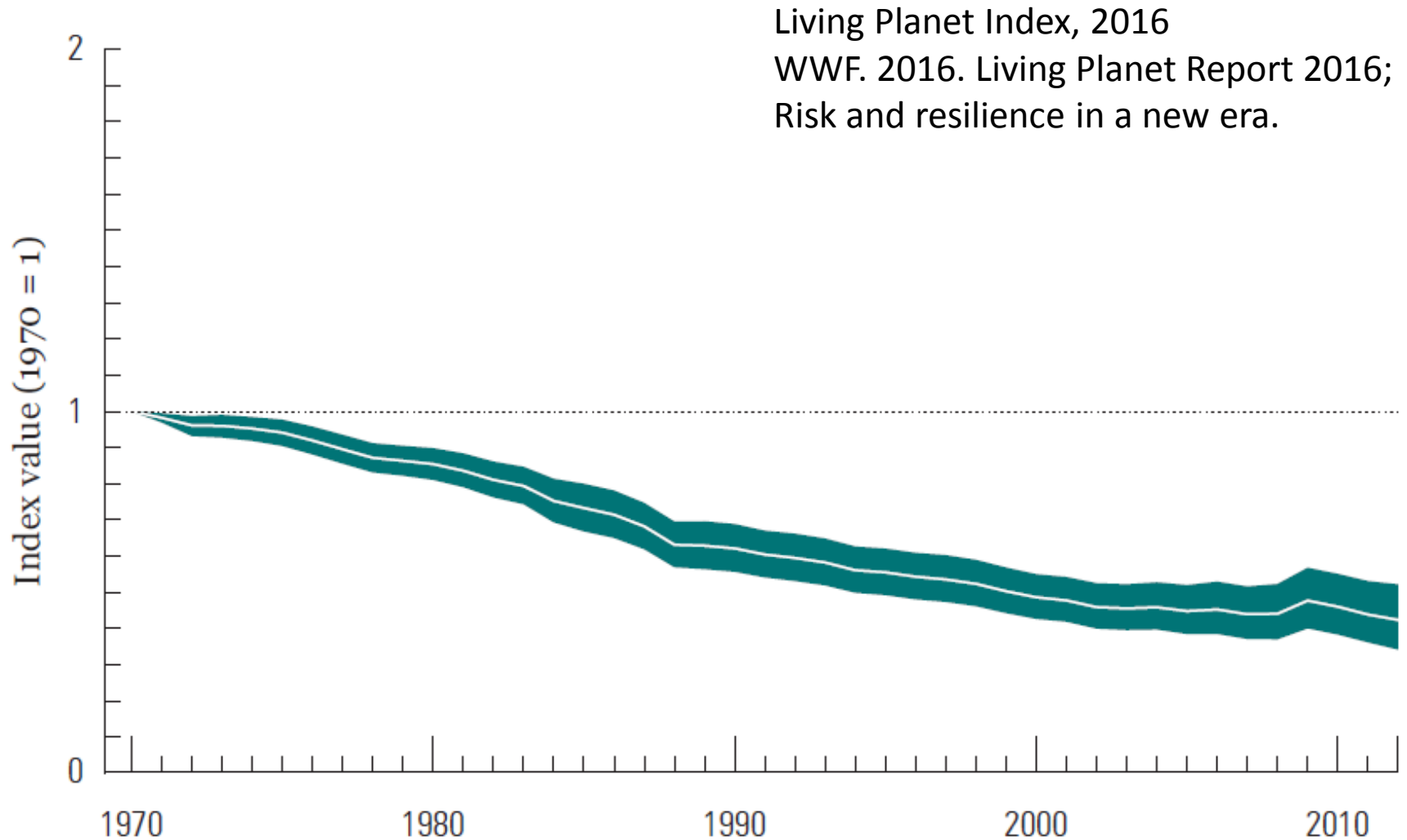
**Global Sustainability
Institute**

Debating the value of nature

Nigel Cooper



We continue to degrade our planet



The value of pricing

Exxon Valdez & Amoco Cadiz

Cents and Sensibility: Economic Valuation and the Nature of "Nature"

Marion Fourcade. 2011

American Journal of Sociology, **116**: 1721-77



Contesting Natural Capital

Debating Nature's Value

The concept of 'natural capital' is at the forefront of national conservation discussions. Our Network will examine its core tenets, the issues raised by a black-and-white economic approach, and the importance of an open discourse on how to best tackle biodiversity challenges.

Art Exhibition, 5-21 April 2018, Cambridge

The project has commissioned artwork from local artist, Rosanna Greaves, as part of the Sustainability Art Prize exhibition; Cambridge School of Art's Ruskin Gallery

Network Conference, April 2018, Cambridge

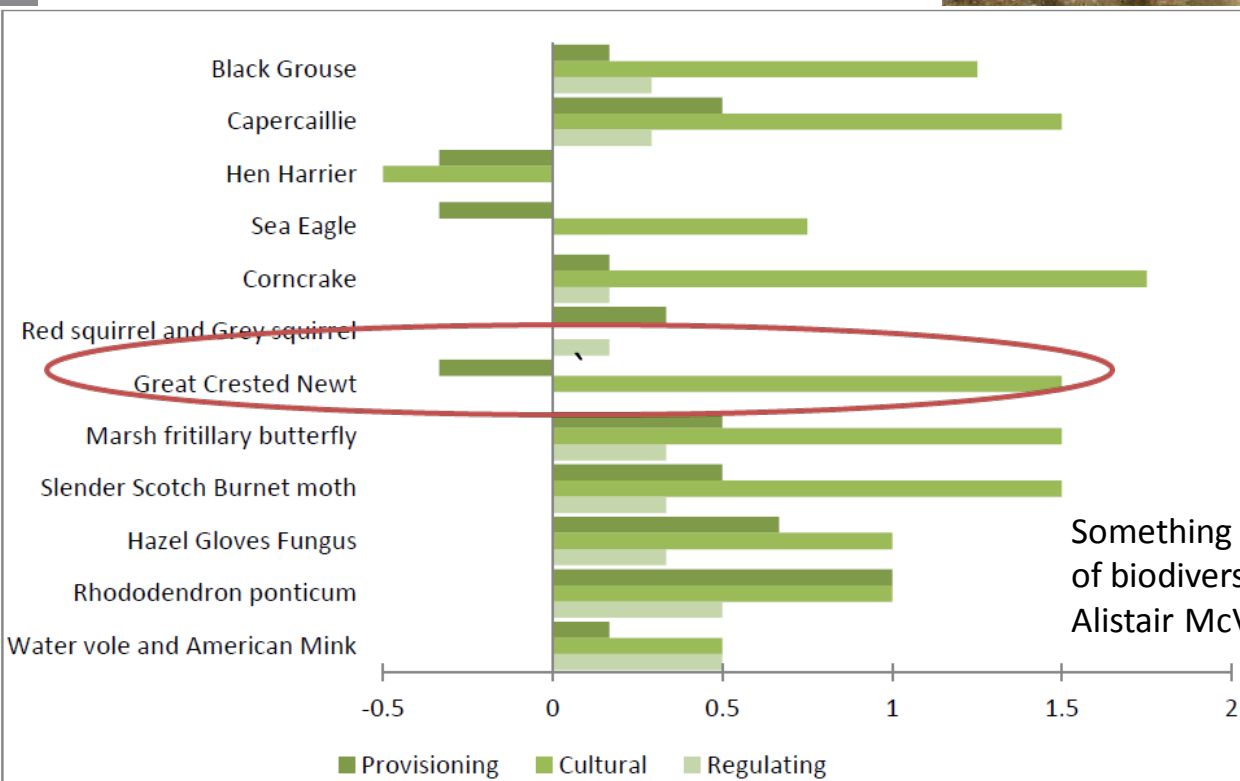
Details to be confirmed

Does Biodiversity contribute to Natural Capital/Ecosystem Services?

- if biodiversity is not protected for its own sake, will the ecosystem services approach also protect biodiversity?
- ...there is now a firm evidence base demonstrating the importance of biodiversity to ecosystem functioning. However, there is less research into whether biodiversity has the same pivotal role for ecosystem services.
- We therefore neglect biodiversity protection at grave risk, even if we do not yet know of a 'purpose' for all of it. Policies to monitor and protect ecosystem services should not replace those designed to monitor and protect biodiversity.
 - Science for Environment Policy (2015) Ecosystem Services and the Environment. In-depth Report 11 on biodiversity

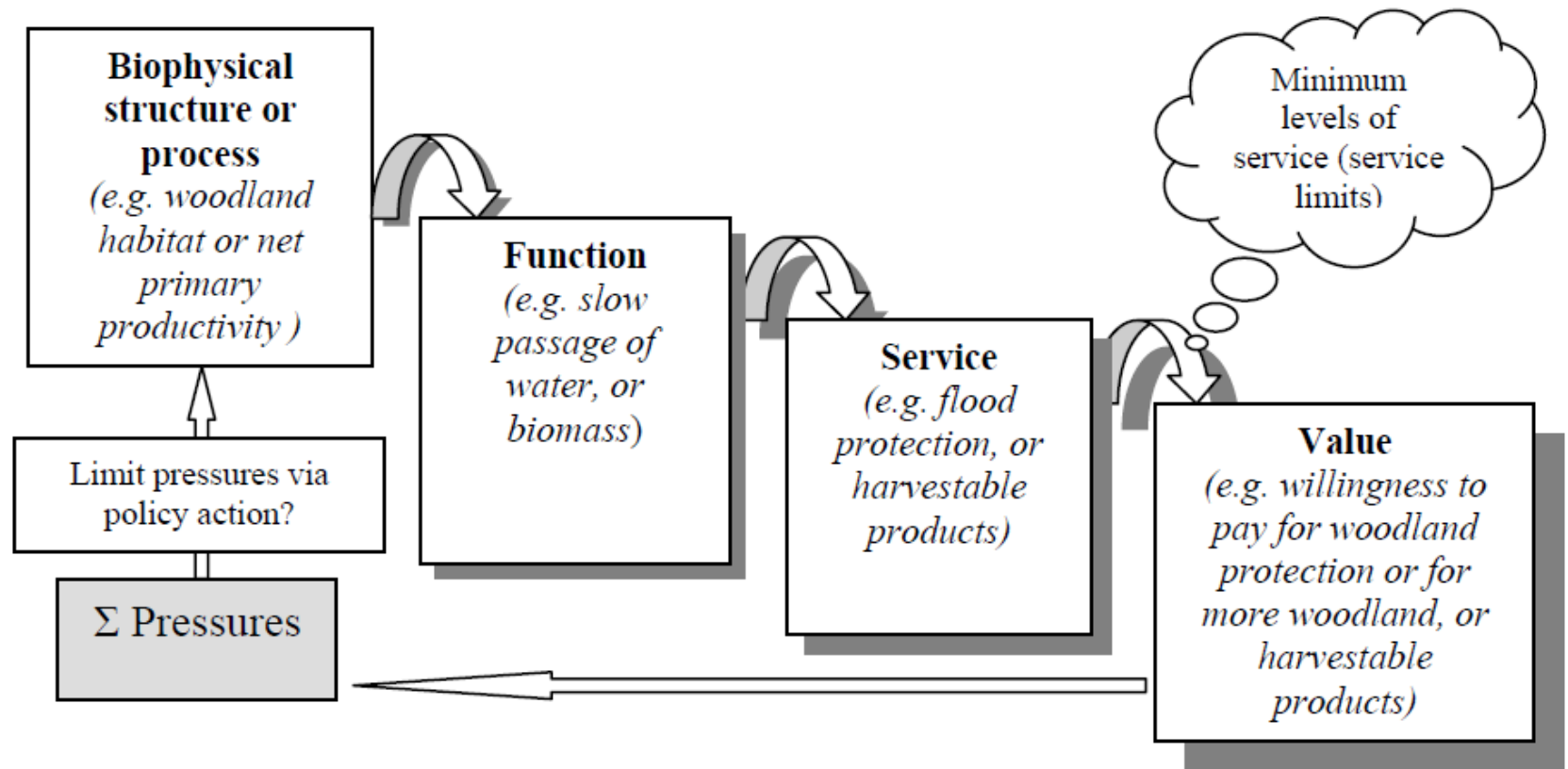
And what is this thing, biodiversity?

- It is not one lumpen mass, but many species and many individuals.
- The death of a GCN is sad; the loss of GCNs from a region is very sad – but will ecosystem services be less?
- Does existence value adequately cope with this?



Something to grouse about? The cost-effectiveness of biodiversity measures in Scotland
Alistair McVittie et al.. 2014

The cascade model of nature



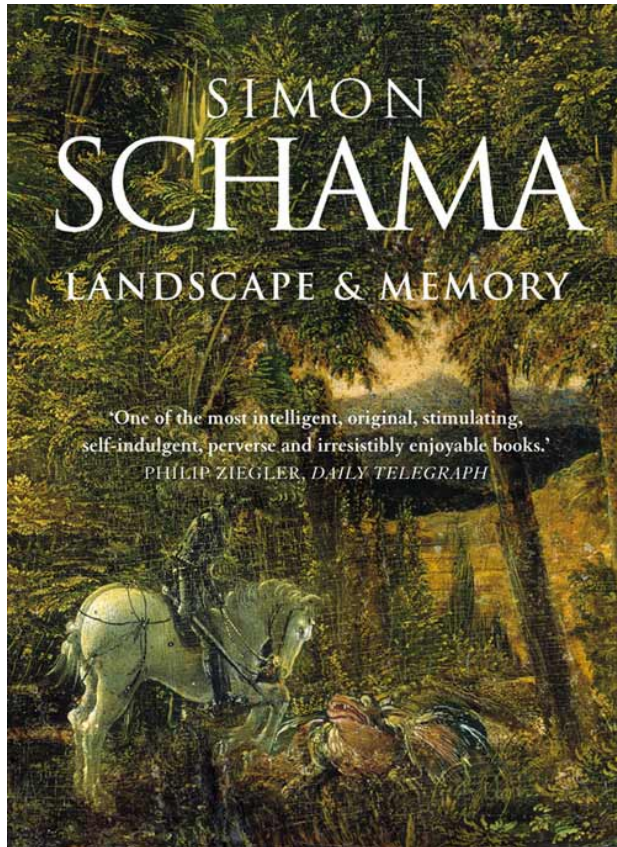
HAINES-YOUNG, R.; POTSCHIN, M. and D. CHESHIRE (2006):
Defining and identifying Environmental Limits for
Sustainable Development. Report to Defra, Project NR0102
Much reproduced and adapted since.

Mind-Nature Dualism

- “Long before the Cogito there is the goodness and truth of the summus.”
 - Erazim Kohák *The Embers and The Stars; a philosophical inquiry into the moral sense of nature*. 1984 Chicago U.P.
- Economics inscribes the Enlightenment mind-body dualism onto nature.
 - Nature is there to provide pleasure for my mind – to “satisfy preferences”
- Minds and bodies are constituted by nature, much as a family constitutes a person – and the person, the family.
- Nature ‘deconstitutes’ us too. We do not own what we cannot take with us.



Humans: the political animals



- Economists' motto: *de gustibus non disputandum est*
- Yet advertisers are keen to adjust our tastes
- Schama, 1995: "Landscapes are culture before they are nature" "The cultural habits of humanity have always made room for the sacredness of nature"
 - Would the 2010 Government have thought of privatising the Forest Estate if they had read Schama's book?
- Deliberation is a key way in which shared values are formed and expressed
 - *Ecosystem Services. 21B, pp175-372 (2016). Special issue: Shared, plural and cultural values. Ed. Jasper Kenter*

Shared, plural and cultural values



Kenter et al. 2014. Shared, plural and cultural values; a handbook for decision-makers. UK NEA Follow-On
<http://sharedvaluesresearch.org/>

When might money not be the best guide to morals?

Anecdotal dialogue of George Bernard Shaw

GBS: Madam, would you sleep with me for a million pounds?

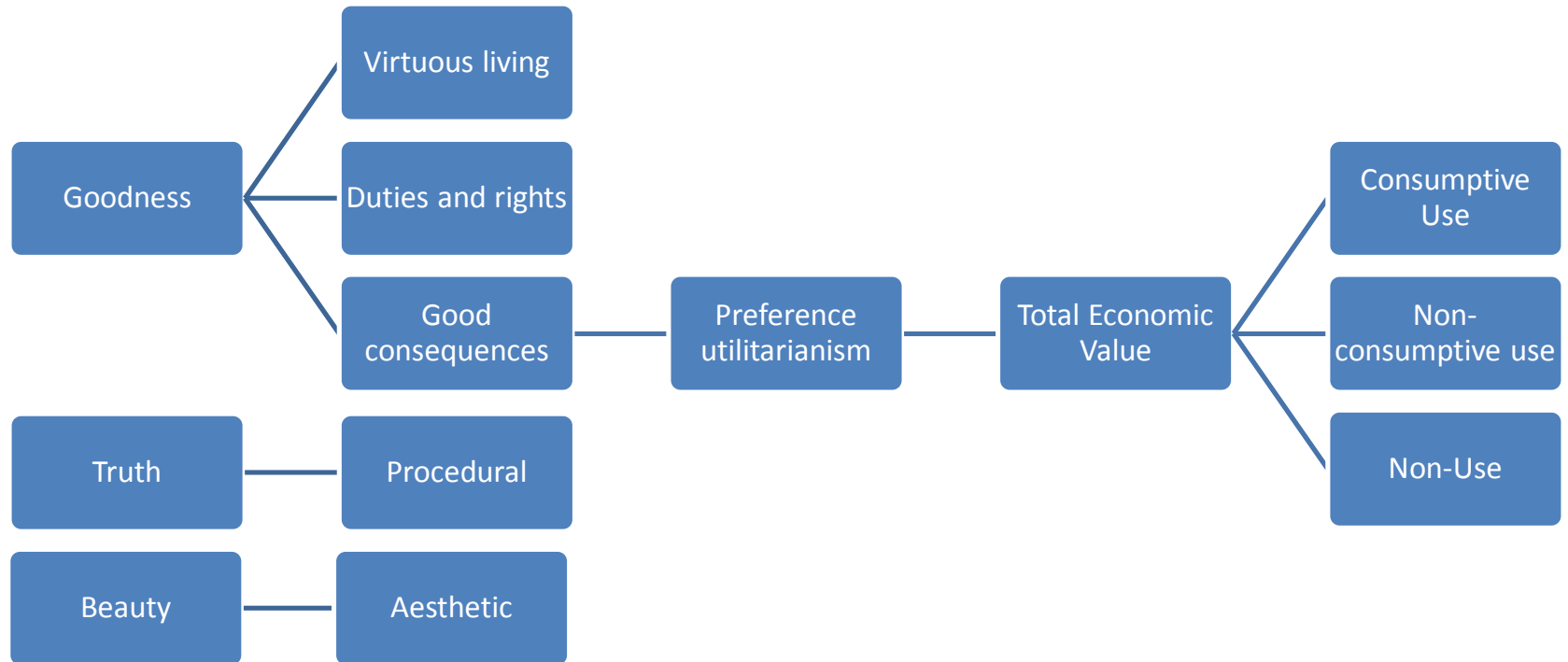
Actress: My goodness, Well, I'd certainly think about it.

GBS: Would you sleep with me for a pound?

Actress: Certainly not! What kind of woman do you think I am?!

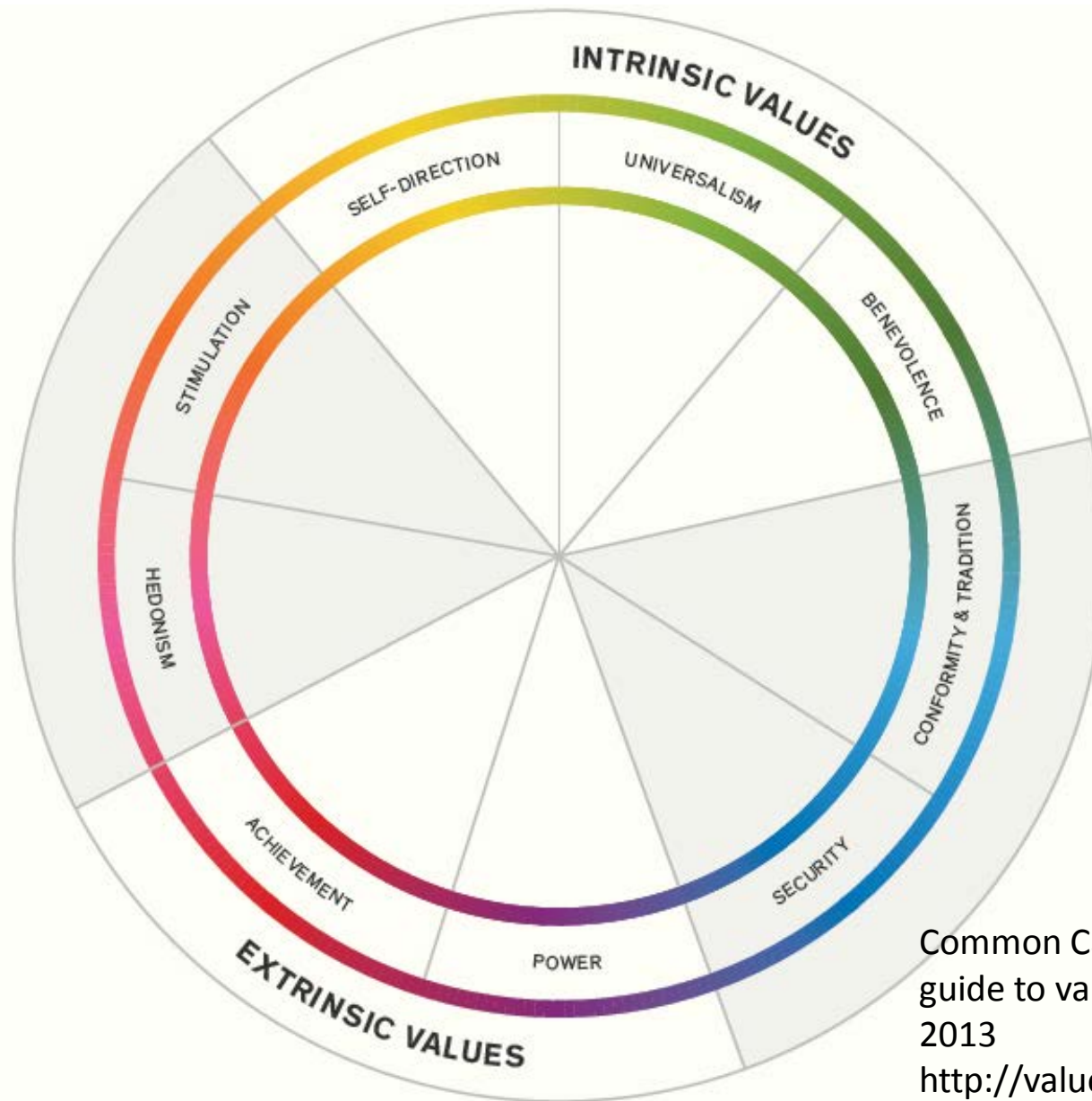
GBS: Madam, we've already established that. Now we are haggling about the price.

Plural values. A dip into axiology.



- Do we have duties towards nature?
 - Conservation had argued that we owed a duty to nature;
 - Ecosystem Services valuation attends to what nature provides us
- Are there virtuous ways for us to live with nature?

Intrinsic in tension with extrinsic values



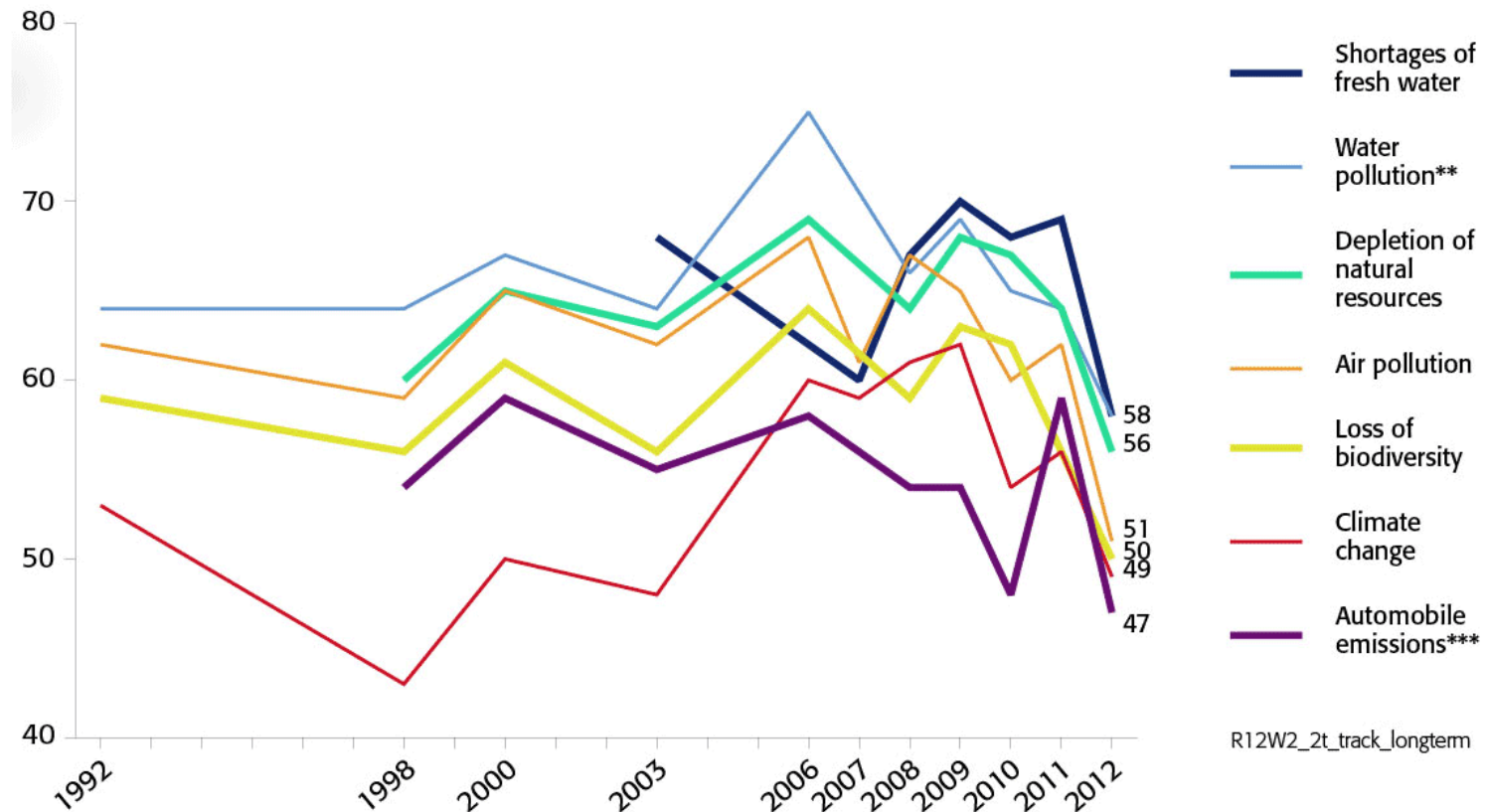
Common Cause for Nature: A practical
guide to values and frames in conservation.
2013
<http://valuesandframes.org/>

Environmental Concerns "At Record Lows"

<http://www.globescan.com/news-and-analysis/press-releases/press-releases-2013/261-environmental-concerns-at-record-lows-global-poll.html>

Seriousness of Issues

"Very Serious," Average of 12 Countries,* 1992–2012



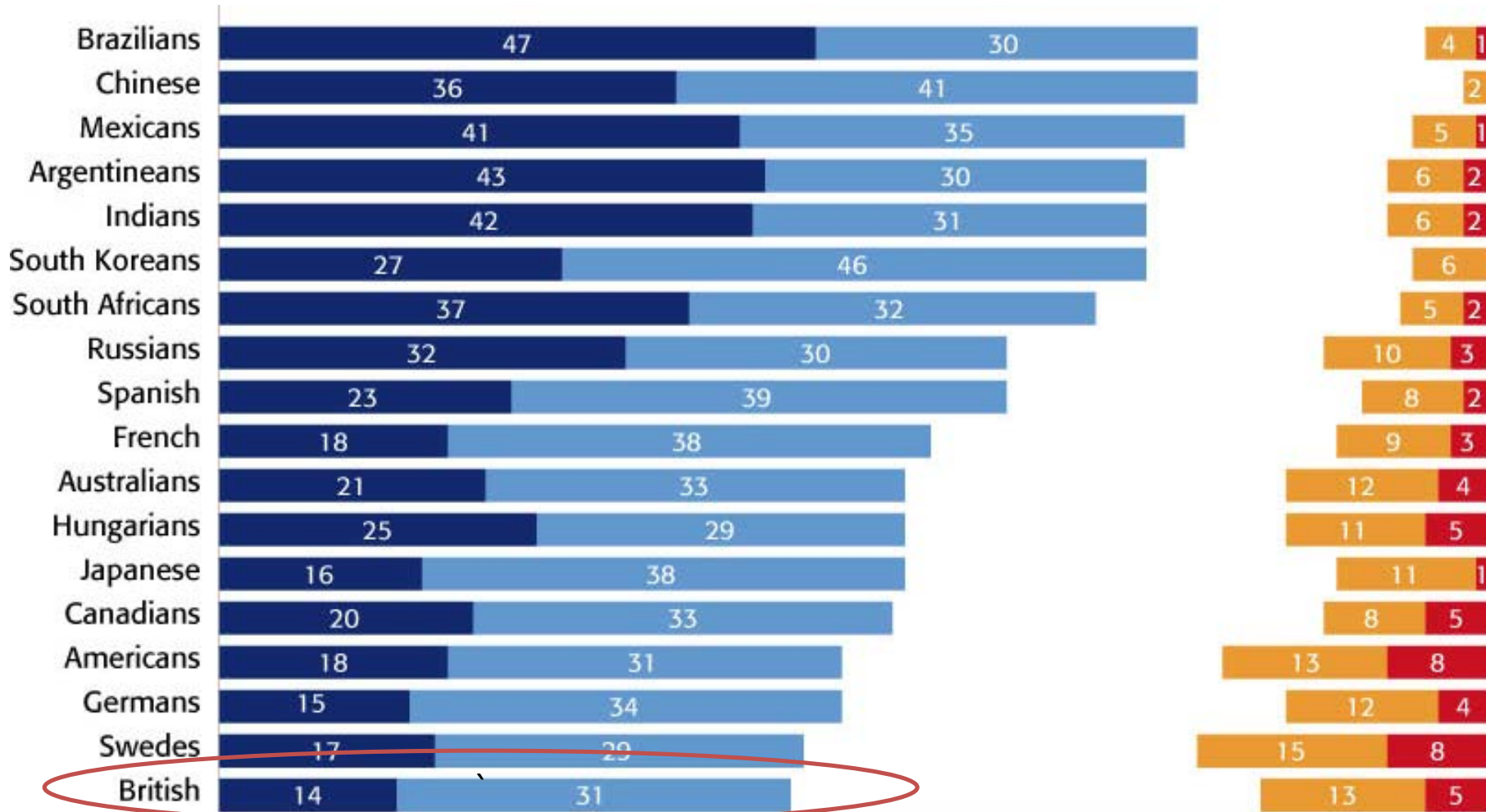
*Average of Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Turkey, UK, and USA.
Not all questions were asked in all countries in all years.

**Not asked in Brazil, Canada, and France

***Not asked in Brazil and Canada

“I Am Very Concerned about Environmental Problems”

Greendex 2014. National Geographic and GlobeScan



Dare to share your motivations

- PERCEPTIONS MATTER; The Common Cause UK Values Survey; 2016
- 74% of respondents place greater importance on compassionate values than selfish values.
- 77% of respondents believe that their fellow citizens hold selfish values to be more important than is actually the case.
- People who hold this inaccurate belief about other people's values feel significantly less positive about getting involved; believing that to do so would risk drawing attention to their compassionate values
 - people believe that ... institutions discourage compassionate values
 - SO we need to challenge the assumptions about the values that most people hold to be important:

**“We have calculated the economic value to be £X,
but the real reason I want to protect nature is I care
(and I suspect you do too).”**

Further reading

Several of the slides have references on them, which you might follow up.

Just this past Saturday, The Guardian ran a long essay on neoliberalism which explains how the pervasiveness of market economics has come about.

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/aug/18/neoliberalism-the-idea-that-changed-the-world>

If you are interested in attending the DNV conference in April, please look at the website of the GSI:

<http://www.anglia.ac.uk/global-sustainability-institute-gsi/research/global-risk-and-resilience/debating-natures-value>

There are very many refereed papers critical of natural capital and the economisation of ecosystems. Here are just a few abbreviated titles:

Parks and Gowdy 2013 What have economists learned about valuing nature?

Wegner and Pascual 2011 CBA – a multidisciplinary critique

Gomez-Baggethu et al. 2010 History of Ecosystem Services in Economic Theory and Practice

Neuteleers and Engelen 2015 Talking money: how market based valuation can undermine environmental protection

Cimon-Morin et al. 2013 Fostering synergies between ES and biodiversity –PLUS debate with Deliege and Neuteleers in 2014 following their criticism of the paper

Batavia and Nelson 2017 For goodness sake! What is intrinsic value and why should we care?

Hejnowicz and Rudd 2017 The Value Landscape in Ecosystem Services: Value, Value Wherefore Art Thou Value?

Martin-Lopez et al. 2014 Trade-offs across value-domains in ecosystem services assessment

Dempsey and Robertson 2012 Ecosystem services : Tensions, impurities, and points of engagement within neoliberalism

Schroter et al. 2014 Ecosystem Services as a contested concept: a synthesis of critique and counter arguments

Chapters 4 and 6 of the main TEEB report <http://www.teebweb.org/our-publications/teeb-study-reports/ecological-and-economic-foundations/> are well worth reading as a counter-balance to chapter 5

More refs i:

On biodiversity and ecosystem services, also look at Harrison et al. 2014 Linkages between biodiversity attributes and ecosystem services: A systematic review

On shared values and deliberation, look particularly at <http://sharedvaluesresearch.org/> and our special issue in Ecosystem Services, starting with

Kenter 2016 Editorial: Shared, plural and cultural values. But see also:

Hansjürgens et al. 2017 Justifying social values of nature: Economic reasoning beyond self-interested preferences; and for a critique:

Chilvers 2009 Deliberative and Participatory Approached in Environmental Geography

For prosperity without growth, see Centre for Understanding Sustainable Prosperity <https://www.cusp.ac.uk/>

Tim Jackson 2017 Prosperity without Growth – Foundations for the Economy of Tomorrow (2ed)

For values and frames:

Lakoff's 1990 "Don't think of an elephant: know your values and frame the debate." is classic. See also his 2010 paper: Why it Matters How We Frame the Environment

More refs ii:

On pluralism of values:

Van Riper et al. 2017 Incorporating Sociocultural Phenomena into Ecosystem-Service Valuation: The Importance of Critical Pluralism

Pascual et al. 2017 Valuing nature's contributions to people: the IPBES approach

Jacobs et al. 2016 A new valuation school: Integrating diverse values of nature in resource and land use decisions

Jackson and Palmer 2015 Reconceptualizing ecosystem services: Possibilities for cultivating and valuing the ethics and practices of care

Cooper et al. 2016 Aesthetic and spiritual values of ecosystems: Recognising the ontological and axiological plurality of cultural ecosystem 'services' (please forgive a self-reference)

On dangers of corporate capture:

Sullivan and Hannis 2017 'Mathematics maybe, but not money': on balance sheets, numbers and nature in ecological accounting

On lack of effective outcome evidence for monetary methods:

Laurans et al. 2013 Use of ecosystem services economic valuation for decision making: Questioning a literature blindspot

Forster et al. 2015 Assessing ecosystem services for informing land-use decisions: a problem-oriented approach

On poor data quality in assessments so far:

Baveye 2017 Quantification of ecosystem services: Beyond all the "guesstimates", how do we get real data?

On conservationists' personal values:

Sandbrook et al. 2010 Value Plurality among Conservation Professionals

Fisher and Brown 2014 Ecosystem services concepts and approaches in conservation: Just a rhetorical tool?

Batavia and Nelson 2017 For goodness sake! What is intrinsic value and why should we care?